

NORMAN ANIMAL WELFARE CENTER OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE
Sept 22, 2014

The Norman Animal Welfare Center Oversight Committee of the City of Norman, Cleveland County, State of Oklahoma, met in the Multi-Purpose room on the 22nd day of September, 2014, at 5:30 p.m. The notice and agenda of the meeting were posted in the Municipal Building at 201 West Gray Street on the 18th of September, 2014. The meeting was also posted on the City of Norman website.

I. CALL TO ORDER.

Co-Chairperson Mark Howery called the meeting to order at approximately 5:33 p.m. He explained how the committee works and that public comments will be heard at the end of meeting and held to three minutes per citizen.

II. ROLL CALL.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Co-Chairperson Mark Howery
Jayne Crumpley
Jennifer Kidney PhD .
Michelle Carey
Stephen Holman, Councilman

ABSENT MEMBERS:

Co-Chairperson Jennifer Golden
Joe Carter, D. V. M.
Ginger Noble, D. V. M.

OTHERS PRESENT:

Jeanne Snider, Assistant City Attorney
Rick Knighton, Assistant City Attorney
Keith Humphrey, Chief of Police
Jim Maisano, Deputy Chief
John Bowman, Animal Welfare Supervisor
Darci Poe, Norman Animal Welfare
Robert Castleberry, Councilman
Greg Heiple, Councilman

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III. APPROVAL OF THE Aug 25, 2014 MINUTES

Co-Chairperson Mark Howery asked if there were any amendments that needed to be made to the minutes.

A motion to accept the minutes with the amendments was made by Michelle Carey and seconded by Jennifer Kidney. The motion was carried.

IV. MONTHLY STATISTICS

John Bowman provided and went over the monthly statistical report. Michelle Carey asked if there was a big increase in bites. John Bowman said not really. Councilman Stephen Holman asked if it was correct that zero adoptable dogs were euthanized. John Bowman answered that was correct. Councilman Stephen Holman asked if the escaped dog had been found. John Bowman said the dog was in an outside kennel, dug under the fence, and ran. The dog has not been found. Co-Chairperson Mark Howery asked if most of the foster to adopt animals were kittens and puppies. John Bowman answered no, they are all ages. Co-Chairperson Mark Howery asked if there were any other questions. Michelle Carey asked what rescue took the cats. John Bowman said that would be something he would have to look up.

V. VOLUNTEER WORK GROUP

Co-Chairperson Mark Howery explained that the work group is not a formal meeting. John Bowman said there was a problem with the name and that it is a work group established by the chief of police and made up of staff and two committee members to develop a volunteer program and standard operating procedures. We have had our second meeting to formalize job tasks and training for those jobs. For example, the position of dog walker is divided up by skill levels. Co-Chairperson Mark Howery said there will be another update at the next meeting. John Bowman said once there is a draft completed, it would be brought to the Animal Welfare Oversight Committee as a whole. Co-Chairperson Mark Howery asked if there were any other questions. Michelle Carey asked if the work group is looking into precautions regarding training. Co-Chairperson Mark Howery answered that the job descriptions did include what training needs would be required and that the foster program would be treated separately.

VI. CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Deputy Chief Maisano said he had good news after their weekly meeting today. The ceiling grids are in place and the AC vents and sprinkler heads are in place. The generator switch should be in tomorrow. We are waiting on the store fronts; they have been shipped to the glass company. The kennels are ready to ship, but we are waiting for everything to be ready

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for the kennels to be installed before they are shipped. One issue that has come up is that there were no modifications in the plan for the incinerators. The gas line needs to be routed in a different way to the incinerators. They are working with architects on this. Michelle Carey asked if the construction was still on target. Deputy Chief Maisano said if you mean the original target date, then no, but the end of October is the completion date for Phase 1. Next month we will have more for an update. Michelle Carey asked whether when we move the new dogs from old shelter to the new, will there be any signage? Deputy Chief Maisano said there will be new doors with signage. Co-Chairperson Mark Howery asked if the gas line would be on the south side. Deputy Chief Maisano said the gas line would go around the building in Phase 2. Deputy Chief Maisano invited the committee members to come by to tour the facility. Co-Chairperson Mark Howery asked if there were any other questions.

VII. FUTURE MEETING DATES

Co-Chairperson Mark Howery listed the meeting dates for 2015. Michelle Carey said that by May, conditions might change and we might not have to meet monthly. Deputy Chief Maisano explained that we need to list the dates for the year for the clerk's office by December 15th; however, we can then change them if needed. Michelle Carey asked if it mattered if we change location. She would like to have the meeting in the new building once it is completed, possibly in November. Deputy Chief Maisano said we would have to post the date, time, and location. Michelle Carey asked if the new building could handle the meeting in November. Co-Chairperson Mark Howery answered possibly not, but we would want to have the meetings there in the future, maybe by next fall. Councilman Stephen Holman asked if we could use the chamber room when available. Co-chairperson Mark Howery agreed that it would give us more space and that is something we can look into. Co-Chairperson Mark Howery also called attention to the questions that were addressed by Chief Humphrey and thanked him for preparing those.

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VIII. MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

Co-Chairperson Mark Howery explained the city's policy and where to stand for public comments.

Deputy Chief Jim Maisano said we still have an adoption program; we do spay and neuter once a week. After Phase 2, we hope to be able to do that twice a week. Our part time kennel attendant is now full time as of July 1st. He said Norman Animal Welfare is open 11am-4pm on Saturdays. He said the shelter is seeking volunteers. During training, they will be trained on how to disinfect leashes and to make sure they wear gloves and change them between tasks.

Mike Cox said he shared a schedule with all the staff and thanked us for being open Saturdays and would like to see the shelter open Sundays. He said people that work during the week would be able to adopt on Saturday/Sundays.

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Dr. Bonnie Boone asked what the miscellaneous category was in the 2014 statistical report that was handed out at the last meeting. That category was high in 2014. Dr. Boone urged the committee to start fresh in the new building by letting the current animals go to foster homes instead of being transferred to new building so they will not contaminate the new building. She said all supplies for the new building needed to be disinfected.

Kate Schartz asked how or in what ways is the new volunteer program being developed and if Norman Animal Welfare has reached out to other animal welfare centers or the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) regarding the volunteer program. She asked how to get items on the agenda.

Co-Chairperson Mark Howery gave examples of which programs the work group is using to form the new volunteer plan.

Casey Holcomb asked what it would cost to train one or two staff in American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) guidelines to recognize if an animal was adoptable or not. He understood it was in the plans for 2014.

Assistant City Attorney Jean Snider said it was in the hand out and they are looking into it.

Casey Holcomb asked what is affordable for training staff. He asked what are the guidelines for recognizing an animal with behavioral problems.

Assistant City Attorney Jean Snider said it is in the answer on page five. She read: John Bowman is actively seeking a program in behavioral testing for an employee to attend. We do not have a date at this time, but are planning to have the adoption coordinator attend this training.

Casey Holcomb said this needs to be a priority. If people are doing behavioral testing while in the kennel, that is not where it should be tested, they need to be outside with different people.

Steve Ellis asked what is the latest version of the volunteer agreement. He asked what is the rationale for the various parts and is the “cooperative behavior” reciprocal? He said the city claims ownership of the photos and wondered if the public could get answers to their questions somehow publicly.

Assistant City Attorney Rick Knighton said this is not an agreement; these are rules. You don't have to agree to them, but you need to abide by them. He said if you look at the AFSME contract and our personnel manual, you will see that they were taken from those documents.

Steve Ellis asked if the volunteers would have the same grievance procedures as employees.

Assistant City Attorney Rick Knighton answered no. He said volunteer rules are rules, AFSME agreement is a contract with employees. He said with regards to photographs, if you

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take a photo, we would have to get your permission to use that photo, which means we would have to get consent for each person with those photographs. He said when the city owns those photos, then everyone can use them and there is no question. He said it has nothing to do with penalizing anyone.

Lauren Lackey said Facebook photos are public and free to everyone.

Jennifer Kidney said all the other shelters have similar rules.

Mary Katherine Long said she worked at the Oklahoma City Animal Welfare and there anyone could take pictures in any of the public areas freely. She said she confirmed this rule and it is still the rule. She said we need to have the animals evaluated to see if they are adoptable or not; it is protection for the public and staff. She suggested looking into the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) Safer program and that the whole staff should be trained as well as volunteers, rescues, and the public. She said the Safer program is great for learning to evaluate animal behavior. She suggested charging rescues \$5.00 each, if Safer is too expensive, to offset some of the cost. She said the gas chamber for wildlife is not the best practice (handed out information) and not humane. She encouraged us to communicate with Rondi Large at Wildcare. She said thank you for opening Saturdays.

Lauren Lackey said she had three things. One- if the gas chamber is not humane for cats and dogs, then it is not humane for wildlife. Two- Wildcare does not use the gas chamber for their animals and they are only 12 miles away from Norman Animal Welfare, so why are we not using Wildcare? Three-Why is the gas chamber in the budget plans?

Amy Baker said she had emailed everyone on the committee. She asked what makes an animal not adoptable. She was in the shelter one day, saw a euthanasia list, and said five of the animals on that list could have been rescued. She asked what the scanning protocol was at the shelter. She asked if an animal is owner surrendered and the microchip is registered to a rescue, do we call the rescue. She asked what happens when staff uses foul language and why grievances are not addressed to the person who filed them.

Rebecca Bean read her letter to the editor that was published in the Norman Transcript. She said she tried to attend the work group meeting but was told to leave.

Taryn Colon said she had questions about the volunteer work group. She said a foster program is needed and needs to be made known. She said there was a dog named Rocky that had a damaged leg over a weekend and had two days left on stray hold. Deputy Jim Maisano made an exception so the dog could get the care he needed. Sita was another example of why we need a foster program. She said the shelter is not ideal for a mom dog and puppies. She said luckily Rebecca Bean saw Sita and was able to get her to a rescue.

Bill Hickman said he read the May 23rd resolution. There are a lot of citizens who would like to be involved in the Ad Hoc Committee. He said the citizens have voted for the people on the

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committee and trust you. He said one representative from the volunteers would be beneficial for that committee, and would bring them together and strengthen the shelter and be the best thing for the animals.

Joanne Collins said she has a dog she is trying hard to re-home and if anyone is interested to please contact her.

Darcie Woodson said she is a board member of Friends of the Animals of Norman (FAN) and some people are not a fan of them. She said she has gone back to read the minutes and that some things stated in 2011 that were going to be worked on have not been done. She said until recently, Friends of the Animals of Norman (FAN) were the only ones interacting with the animals. She said having a vet on staff and a foster program is needed. She said some animals that have been euthanized could have been saved with an on-site vet or foster program or by treating heartworm and mange. She said in January through May, they have raised money to treat animals, but since then they have been excluded and therefore no money has been raised. She asked how many animals could have been saved if they were still in the picture. She asked what makes an animal adoptable or non-adoptable.

John Lusk said the Animal Oversight Committee was created for a reason and that is proof that there have been issues and that can things happen and it is your job to make sure they don't. He said you do this city a disservice when you take the representatives of Animal Welfare at their word for anything, not that they are lying. He said that Friend of the Animals of Norman (FAN) was kicked out for no reason. He said there was no reason ever given as to why. He also said some emails that have been sent to Animal Welfare were not answered. He said Norman Animal Welfare is clearly unable or unwilling to take on this volunteer program as it stands now. He said none of this should have been an issue.

Angela Steinle said she would encourage things to be made easier for the public and for volunteers. She said she has two dogs. She said one was difficult to adopt from Norman because she could not come to the shelter in time during the week to adopt. She also said she was told not to worry because the dog was "ugly". She said she would encourage more training for the staff and being open Saturdays/Sunday.

Brianne Zimmerman said thank you for opening Saturdays. She said the Saturday hours should increase adoptions.

Alisha Maag said Dr. Boone and Animal Resources Center can do another day a week for spay and neutering.

Emily Nichols said she is the interim president of Friends of the Animals of Norman (FAN). She said she wanted to finish what Darcie was saying about the misleading numbers of adoptable versus unadoptable. She said animals have been switched to that category when convenient; when an animal is adoptable but then gets sick in the shelter or develops behavior issues due to lack of socialization that category changes. She said Friends of the Animals of Norman (FAN) wants to help the Norman Animal Welfare center and to be part of it. She said they would like to

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offer help, volunteer management, and to raise money. She said we need to work together to improve.

She said we appreciate that the shelter is better, but there is more to accomplish. She said the new building is nice; however, the city needs to reach out for help, all they need to do is ask. She encouraged people to go see the shelter and go through the volunteer program so they can see how it is now versus the old.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Michelle Carey at approximate 6:52p.m. The motion was seconded by Jennifer Kidney; the motion was carried.

ATTEST:

Mark Howery Co-Chairperson